Importance of Creative Fluidity: The Intersection of Gender, Identity, and Aesthetic Expression

Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing degree.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
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Abstract

This thesis examines the intersection of gender, identity, and creativity through the works of Virginia Woolf, Judith Butler, and other relevant authors. It explores how the thematic aspects of androgyny, gender fluidity, and performativity challenge binary understandings of the self. Drawing on *A Room of One's Own*, *Orlando*, *Gender Trouble*, and *Undoing Gender* as primary texts, and applying them to films such as *Ghetuputra Komola* (2012) and *Joyland* (2022), and other creative works, this study argues that identity is not just an essence but a continuous process of becoming, which affects creativity. Woolf's notion of the "androgynous mind" hints at Butler's theory of "gender performativity," suggesting that creativity becomes independent when it is free from fixed gender roles. Thus, the research reinterprets Woolf's literary imagination through Butler's lenses to demonstrate that the subversion of gender fixities opens a transformative space where art merges with the fluidity of gender characteristics. South Asian films, such as *Ghetuputra Komola* and *Joyland*, portray how fluid gender subjectivities complicate conventional narratives of gender or the body. Finally, by bridging modernist aesthetics, poststructuralist and queer theory, with postcolonialism, feminist criticism, and transnational feminism, this research analyzes how androgyny, performativity, and gender fluidity should not merely be considered as themes but must be understood as creative practices that redefine subjectivity and artistic expression.

Keywords: gender; identity; creativity; androgyny; performativity; fluidity; fixity; transformative.

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Chapter 1

[Introduction]

The correlation among gender, identity, and creativity has long been a central focus of literary and theoretical discourse. Their relationship has become one of the most dynamic areas of contemporary criticism, which often demands developed critical observation as modern understandings of performance, fluidity, and personification across cultural or creative contexts. However, gender boundaries are expanding beyond artistic, philosophical, and theoretical landscapes. So the need to reexamine authoritative and contemporary texts that interrogate identity construction or representation has also increased. Hence, this thesis employs the intersection of modernist aesthetics, poststructuralist thinking, queer theory with feminist criticism, postcolonialism, and transnational feminist perspectives to examine how gendered identity is not a fixed condition, but an ongoing process that influences creativity. By situating Virginia Woolf's theory of creative androgyny, which challenges restrictive binaries of masculinity and femininity, in dialogue with Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity, which restructures modern conceptions of gender, and referring to other literary or cinematic examples, this research aims to argue that creativity thrives in the subtle spaces where identity becomes fluid.

Taking these two thinkers' writings as a principle for this study was crucial because Woolf's exploration and Butler's formula challenge the

essentialist understandings of identity, insisting on a creative mode of being. Woolf reframes creativity as an androgynous force that goes beyond socially constructed categories of masculinity and femininity. She imagines a creative mind that blurs the boundaries between masculine and feminine identities. Therefore, Butler unfolds the artificiality of gender categories by claiming that gender is a complex performative act mastered through repetition. The aim of this study is not only to merge these ideologies but also to construct a broader, comprehensive framework for understanding how the concept of gender helps to produce new narratives. Additionally, this thesis foregrounds how gender becomes the space in which the self can be imagined otherwise. As gendered identities are recreated, social hierarchies are challenged through expressing unique forms of selfhood.

For Woolf, creativity is tied to material independence, intellectual freedom, and the ability to think beyond fixities. For Butler, creativity comes through the modification of gendered identities by performing gender differently. Both frameworks suggest visualizing creativity as a disruptive force because it battles cultural thoughts that construct gender. Thus, this thesis positions Woolf’s modernist aesthetics as an early founder of gender identity politics. While she advocates for an androgynous realization which transcends gendered limitations, Butler advocates for the subversion of gender itself. Despite these differences, both theorists open new paths for understanding gender as an evolving practice. Their insights create a space that allows this thesis to articulate

its argument, drawing on the fact that gendered creativity is rooted in fluidity.

By connecting Woolf's literary imagination and Butler's mediation, this thesis establishes gender fluidity not only as a marginal concern but as a foundation for creative independence. In both conceptual contexts, gender becomes a site of negotiation and instability. These frameworks reveal a shared understanding that identity is not an inherited sense but an active fabrication. Consequently, concepts of androgyny, gender fluidity, and performativity allow this study to argue that creativity is liberated when identity is understood not as essence but as action. This enables artists, creators, performers, and writers to resist the disciplinary formations of gender. The acknowledgment of masculinity and femininity as social constructs critiques the assumptions rooted in these very categories.

Woolf's notion of the "androgynous mind" was first theorized in the extended essay, *A Room of One's Own*. Later, its personification is represented through the description of the transformative protagonist in the novel *Orlando*. It offers one of the earliest queer thinking through its century spans and seamless gender shifts. It destabilizes narrative and gender boundaries. With this novel, Woolf proves that true creativity unfolds when socially imposed gender roles do not confine the author's intellect. Androgyny visualizes Butler's later declaration in *Gender Trouble,* which proposes that gender is not rooted in any "biological truth." Butler's theory of performativity, as developed in *Gender Trouble*

and *Undoing Gender*, modifies such conceptualizations by incorporating a philosophical critique that suggests that gender is never complete, never natural, and has always been open to reformation because it is a process of becoming.

Although Woolf and Butler write from distinct historical periods and intellectual traditions, their theoretical dialogues are connected through the radical questioning of binaries. Their works collectively resist the rooted establishments that limit identity, voice, and artistic visualization. By incorporating secondary materials, articles, texts, broader cultural references, literary theoretical frameworks, critiques, and politics, this research testifies that the fluidity of gender is foundational to artistic imagination. According to researcher Jane Goldman, “Woolf writes from a European modernist tradition, but her concept of androgyny has global resonance” (1998). Likewise, Butler’s poststructuralist theory has been widely adapted in non-Western contexts to critique colonial legacies, hetero-patriarchal norms, and state-imposed gender expectations. However, the range of this thesis extends beyond these two key figures and moves from a direct comparison of their works. It seeks to develop a broader interdisciplinary framework that shows how fluidity shapes aesthetic expression and individuality. As an intellectual and artistic concept, it can extend beyond global literary traditions into cinematic representations.

Also, this study situates gender fluidity in global contexts beyond the Western canon. This research seeks to place Woolf and Butler within

a broader framework of thought, as gender identity is shaped by social, political, and historical forces. For this reason, postcolonial, queer, and transnational feminist perspectives are necessary for understanding fluid identity beyond Western frameworks. While Woolf and Butler remain central, their ideas resonate within diverse cultural productions, including contemporary cinema, non-Western feminist discourses, representations of South Asia, and beyond. Transnational feminism underscores that gender is formed not only by individual expression but also by systems of power, economic inequalities, and cultural expectations. In this sense, gender fluidity must be understood within specific geopolitical contexts, each of which produces different expressions, resistances, and constraints. This will reveal that artistic expression serves as a means of negotiating these complexities, and creativity is not merely aesthetic; it is political.

Hence, this thesis expands the cultural contexts into transnational conditions by revealing that androgyny, fluidity, and performativity operate differently, marked by social ideologies and history. This allows the thesis to develop a more intersectional approach, acknowledging that gendered creativity does not emerge in isolation but in relation to sociopolitical constraints. Extending this argument to literary and visual creations demonstrates how the idea of gender shapes artistic discourses. Films such as *Ghetuputra Komola* (2012) and *Joyland* (2022) explore queer lifestyles, drag cultures, and marginalized lives among

deeply heteronormative societies. They collectively echo most of the concerns addressed by Woolf and Butler.

Ghetuputra Komola dramatizes the tensions between performative arts and social stigma surrounding non-normative identities, while *Joyland* illustrates how the performance of gender challenges the moral codes of a conservative society. These films reveal that gender fluidity, despite the theorization in Euro-American intellectual spaces, manifests differently in postcolonial realities marked by class structures, religious norms, and marginalization. The addition of these films enriches the examination of this study by revealing how issues of gender performativity and creative expression are negotiated, especially in postcolonial and transnational settings.

Ghetuputra Komola shows how androgynous gendered performance can be connected to creativity. It also reveals how traditional theatrical forms result in violence and moral regulations forced on non-traditional identities. It portrays a young boy, exploited in a traditional female performer's role during the British colonial period in rural Bengal. Though he does not enjoy his job, he is forced to do it because of financial instability. Being a ghetu performer, he experiences life-threatening dangers such as molestation, sexual violence, and eventual death. Similarly, in *Joyland*, Biba, a transgender character, dancer, and performer, embodies Butler's politics of drag. Butler notes that political change never requires discovering a fixed identity, but requires challenging the norms that produce these identities. Biba

challenges societal assumptions and sabotages the patriarchal values of her society. The film tries to portray that gender is not a stable marker of identity but a fragile standard that breaks under the pressure of individual desire.

The central argument of this study focuses on the idea that creativity prospers in places where gender is not fixed but questioned, performed, and reimagined. This implies that creativity becomes a method through which individuals reinvent their inner selves and resist the limitations imposed on them by normative gender roles. Creativity, in this sense, becomes a generative space where the limits of identity can be transcended. Literature and films provide the space for breaking traditional gender roles and concepts. They exhibit how creative performance turns into a battleground for identity and resistance. This broader lens also addresses the junction between class, gender, sexuality, and cultural expression, illustrating how identity formation is always context-dependent and relational. Woolf’s idea of androgynous imagination, Butler’s concept of performative identity, and contemporary cinematic representations of fluidity together demonstrate that gender is not merely lived; it is performed, resisted, revised, and remade. This dynamic creative force shapes the new possibilities of artistic and personal becoming. Ultimately, this thesis becomes a mediation of the ongoing debates on identity, gender, and creativity.

1.1 [Contextual Background and Overview of the Primary Texts]

This study of gender fluidity, performativity, and creative identity engages closely with its primary texts that construct the conceptual groundwork: Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929), *Orlando* (1928), and Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) and *Undoing Gender* (2004). These works, despite being separated by sixty years and belonging to different intellectual traditions, articulate a reimagining of identity and challenge the restrictive binaries that have shaped literary, philosophical, or cultural understandings of gender. They expand and complicate the discussion of creative fluid selfhood. Each work points out the relationship of gender and creativity, revealing how identity is constructed, contested, and transformed in different contexts.

A Room of One's Own is one of the most influential feminist essays of the twentieth century. It cites creativity, androgyny, and the politics of space. This extended essay blends fiction and nonfiction, personal reflection and political critique. Written as lectures to be delivered at fictional Newnham and Girton colleges, it sheds light on the fact that women's creativity has historically been suppressed by material domination and patriarchal norms. Woolf's famous assertion that "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction" reflects not only economic inequality but also the gendered division of intellectuality (4). Moreover, it calls for androgyny as creative liberation. Woolf's concept of the "androgynous mind" reinterprets feminist ideas.

She mentions that the best creative minds are those in which masculine and feminine energies flow harmoniously, unblocked by any expectations. This judgement predicts later queer and feminist theories that critique binary thinking and emphasize fluidity.

Ruoyao Lyu, Chunning Wang, and Yuan Gao (2024) state that, “For Woolf, androgyny does not erase gender differences but liberates the imagination from societal restrictions. It is a symbolic ideal of creative freedom that encourages writers to transcend normative roles” (1). *Orlando* extends her exploration of gender fluidity into the area of fiction. It serves as a proto-queer narrative of gender transformation. The novel follows the protagonist Orlando through centuries, shifting from male to female while moving fluidly through historical moments, identities, and aesthetic experiences. This text challenges the fixity of gender by presenting the self as something changeable, performative, and deeply intertwined with cultural norms. Woolf underlines this instability of gender: “It is odd to think of Orlando as a woman one moment and as a man the next” (138). Here, gender change serves as a narrative device. The novel portrays sex change as an imaginative and symbolic act.

Orlando’s gender transformation also functions as a metaphor for the instability of identity and the possibility of experiencing life beyond restrictive categories, such as being in a relationship with the same gender. Woolf uses changing pronouns, narrative disruptions, and playful language to question how gender shapes social experience, legal identity, and creative potential. *Orlando* strongly highlights Butler’s claims of

gender performativity. Like Butler's theoretical performers, Orlando's gendered identities are created through acts of performance that both conform to and go against cultural expectations. *Gender Trouble* is an ideological text in queer theory and poststructuralist feminist thought. It challenged the root assumptions about sex, gender, and identity, positioning gender not as an internal truth but as a socially constructed, repetitive performance. These repeated acts include clothing, posture, gesture, speech, and desire. Here, Butler introduces a concept called the heterosexual matrix. It is a system that links sex, gender, and desire into a coherent model. This focuses on the illusion that gender identity naturally follows sex.

It critiques traditional feminism and psychoanalysis for assuming a fixed female subject. This text revolutionized feminist theory by arguing that the category "woman" is not stable, universal, or biologically determined. According to her, gender development rely on heteronormative assumptions. Butler argues that feminism risks reproducing execution through assuming that all women share similar experiences and identity. This perspective directly challenges earlier feminist frameworks that assumed a unified female identity. Moreover, the central argument of *Gender Trouble* is that gender identity is produced through repeated acts that cite and re-cite social norms. According to her, gender identity is not something one has, but something one builds with repetition. "Gender is not a fact; the various acts of gender create the idea of gender, and without those acts, there

would be no gender at all. Gender is, thus, a construction that regularly conceals its genesis" (Butler 33). These acts give the illusion of a coherent identity, but in reality, gender is a constant reproduction structured by cultural expectations.

Also, one of Butler's most influential discussions is the politics of drag. Drag performance, in Butler's words, exposes the constructed nature of gender by overstressing the very norms it imitates. It weakens the idea of authenticity. While drag does not automatically resist normative structures, it holds subversive potential by revealing the fragility of gender boundaries. For this thesis, Butler's work provides a theoretical grounding for understanding identity as a product, aligning with Woolf's idea of androgyny as a creative process. If identity is performative, then creativity becomes a site of re-signification where gender can be reevaluated because identity intersects with creativity. Thus, *Undoing Gender* expands Butler's earlier arguments by exploring the ethics, limits of recognition, and politics of gender identity.

"Let's face it. We're undone by each other. And if we're not, we're missing something… One does not always stay intact" (Butler 23). Here, Butler again gestures toward the instability of identity, which can shift and transform in relation to desire. In this text, Butler focuses on the conditions under which lives are recognized as legitimate. She examines how social norms constrain identity and how individuals resist these constraints through various forms of self-fashioning. It interrogates the binary structure of gender and examines how individuals whose identities

fall outside normative categories face violence, invisibility, or erasure. That is why Butler's discussions connect directly with Woolf's concerns about women's exclusion from literary and intellectual spaces. In *Undoing Gender*, creativity emerges as an act of "undoing", a process of challenging standardized scripts and creating new meanings. This reinforces the thesis's central argument that gender fluidity encourages creative liberation.

To demonstrate that gender fluidity is not limited to Western literary-philosophical texts, this study incorporates broader cultural creative texts that engage with identity performance, fluid selfhood, and creative resistance. Cinema, in particular, offers a powerful medium for representing gender as embodied, relational, and visually expressive. *Ghetuputra Komola* and *Joyland* serve as key examples of how gender performativity intersects with cultural norms, artistic expression, and political resistance in South Asian contexts. *Ghetuputra Komola* represents performance, gender, and marginality in colonial Bengal. Set in the early twentieth century, and directed by Humayun Ahmed, this film portrays the tradition of 'ghetu' boys, young male performers who adopt feminine roles in musical theater traditions. During that time, women were not allowed on stage. So, pre-adolescent boys were feminized through costume, makeup, and gesture. They were trained to perform female roles as they were delicate compared to adults. These performers navigate gender fluidity within a cultural space that at once celebrates and defames them. This film also serves as an example of gender as

creative art. The ghetu performer of this movie engages in artistic labor or performance that blurs the boundaries of masculinity and femininity, revealing the socially constructed nature of these categories. His body becomes a site of meaning, echoing Butler's claim that gender emerges through styled re-signification.

Joyland represents queer desire and the politics of performance. Set in contemporary Pakistan, this film explores the intersecting lives of individuals as they navigate desire, gender, and societal expectations. The central character of the film, Biba, is a transgender performer who disrupts normative expectations of masculinity and femininity. She embodies many of Butler's statements regarding gender as a performance. Her identity is constructed through dance, gesture, voice, and embodiment, which are all various forms of creative self-fashioning. So far, unlike the abstract theoretical frameworks of Western academia, Biba's life unfolds within a deeply patriarchal, conservative, and class-oriented society. This film plays the role of creative expression as subversion. It demonstrates that performance can be a site of empowerment while exposing social violence.

These examples reveal how artistic traditions both resist and internalize colonial structures of morality, respectability, and modernity. They highlights how androgyny and performativity manifest in creative contexts forged by economic instability and patriarchal control. This adds a postcolonial and transnational dimension to the examination of gender fluidity. The performers of these films embody multiple identities through

art and dance. Whether in Woolf's androgynous mind, Butler's performative subject, or the cinematic bodies, gender fluidity emerges as a dynamic force that shapes how individuals experience themselves and engage with the world. Hence, identity and creativity intersect in literature, philosophy, and visual culture. Gender fluidity is not only a theoretical possibility but a re-conceptualizing practice that allows individuals, writers, performers, and thinkers to recreate themselves.

1.2 [Rationale and Scope of the Study]

Existing scholarship rarely places Woolf and Butler in continual dialogue as theorists of creativity, while offering knowledge of gender, identity, and power. Thus, Woolf and Butler are widely studied individually, their shared understanding of creativity as a reformative practice remains underexplored. Their concepts have both been approached within different disciplines and frameworks. Woolf's knowledge of androgyny is typically treated as a modernist aesthetic principle and feminist criticism, while Butler's performativity is positioned as a philosophical or political critique of identity within queer theory, poststructuralism, and contemporary gender studies. Integrating Woolf's modernist aesthetics with Butler's poststructuralist theory, this thesis allows for a nuanced understanding of how gender is imagined, embodied, and performed. Also, by extending their knowledge, this study acknowledges global variations in gendered experience.

Additionally, the thesis conceptualizes creativity as a dynamic site of gender negotiation because it becomes a means through which identities are challenged and a site of gendered transformation. The rationale of this research addresses this conceptual separation between literary aesthetics and gender theory. This study acknowledges that gender fluidity is the source of creative expression. By situating Woolf and Butler in an ongoing conversation, this study relocates creativity as a critical site where gender norms are not only represented but also actively undone. The study further justifies itself by being involved in debates surrounding creativity. Woolf clearly challenges the model of independent masculine genius by exposing how literary history marginalizes women's creativity. Alternatively, Butler demonstrates how subjectivity is represented through discourse. Reading them together allows the thesis to prove that creativity is not the expression of a stable self but a process inscribed by performativity and social constraints.

Moreover, this research is motivated by the need to expand discussions of gender fluidity beyond Western frameworks. Incorporating transnational perspectives, it challenges the universalization of Western feminist, queer frameworks and sheds attention to the cultural fixity of gender performance. The thesis responds to this call by putting Woolf and Butler within a broader global discourse of identity. Along with literary texts, theoretical discourse, and representations, this study reforms creativity where identity is continuously negotiated. Therefore, this study offers a framework for understanding creativity as a site where

gender norms are ignored, providing an ideology for future research that may expand its scope across disciplines.

1.3 [Research Questions]

This study is guided by a group of interrelated research questions that appear directly from its conceptual concerns, which will be articulated in the upcoming chapters. These questions are logical and investigative in nature, ordered with qualitative literary research. Therefore, this research will analyze how the dialogue between Woolf's aesthetics, Butler's philosophy, and the cinematic examples highlight gender fluidity as a creative mode rather than just a thematic concern and how the primary and secondary sources conceptualize gender as fluid, performative, and non-essential beyond Western and binary models of selfhood. Additionally, how do the films *Ghetuputra Komola* and *Joyland* project that creativity functions as a site where gender norms are challenged and reimagined. Hence, rather than alienating gender and fluidity as detached knowledge, this research insists on a comparative path that foregrounds continuity, complexity, and transformation.

Chapter 2

[Methodology]

This research adopts a qualitative method grounded in close reading, meta-synthesis, and theoretical interpretation for exploring the primary texts. These texts specifically engage with questions of gender, identity, and creativity. Besides, for making this research relevant, some secondary materials have been selected, which directly cite *A Room of One's Own*, *Orlando*, *Gender Trouble*, and *Undoing Gender*. Therefore, the secondary data consists of selected literary and theoretical formulas, which include journal articles, books, critical essays, and research texts. Thereupon, for making this analysis more reliable, resources are chosen from both past and present times.

In addition to proving its authenticity, the thesis addresses prominent thinkers, authors, theorists, critics, and scholars such as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Gloria Anzaldúa, José Esteban Muñoz and so on. Besides, particular attention is given to feminist literary criticism, modernist studies, poststructuralist philosophy, queer theory, postcolonial thoughts, and transnational feminist discourse for supporting interpretive claims by situating the analysis within the ongoing scholarly debates. Furthermore, selected films are used as examples to illustrate the theoretical arguments of the research analysis.

2.1 [Research Gap and Limitations]

Despite addressing individual knowledge of Woolf and Butler, a critical gap remains in the existing literary and creative scholarship on the intersection of gender fluidity, creativity, and aesthetic practice. The concept of an “androgynous mind” in *A Room of One’s Own* has been widely framed as a symbolic, psychological ideal for artistic balance. On the other hand, Butler’s theory of gender performativity has been particularly analyzed in relation to embodiment, identity politics, and standardization. These intellectual thoughts are often treated as disciplinarily and chronologically different from each other, which limits the scope of discussions.

Present studies try to focus on Woolf’s engagement as a metaphor for women’s creative freedom or emancipation, without totally positioning it as a proto-theoretical framework that uncovers later formulations of performativity and gender as a process. On the other hand, Butler’s works *Gender Trouble* and *Undoing Gender* are often read in isolation, with limited attention to how modernist aesthetic alteration frames performative understandings of identity because subversion happens through altered performances. As a result, creativity is seldom theorized as a conceptual ground in which Woolf’s and Butler’s ideas meet. Applying Butlerian frameworks to Woolf’s critique for examining gender ambiguity often remains text-specific discussions, which do not sufficiently explore creativity as a site of gender destabilization or re-signification.

The relationship between gender fluidity and artistic production, particularly how creativity functions as a module of resistance against fixed gender roles, remains underexplored. The thesis addresses this critical gap by arguing that both thinkers conceptualize creativity as a site where gender is dislocated, re-performed, and revised. This gap becomes more prominent while considering transnational and postcolonial contexts. Whereas transnational feminist scholars have investigated the dominance of Western gender exemplification, very few studies have meaningfully connected Woolf's and Butler's theories with non-Western cultural representations of gender performativity or fluidity. Consequently, the fusion of global crafts and cultural narratives with discussions of gendered creativity remains limited, particularly in postcolonial comparative frameworks that bridge literature, theory, and visual art. By bringing Woolf's aesthetics and Butler's philosophy, this study states that gender fluidity operates not merely as a thematic concern but as a creative practice.

Moreover, while this thesis is based on interdisciplinary and comparative research, it is vulnerable to several methodological and conceptual limitations. First, this study is primarily based on textual analysis, focusing on close readings of selected literary and theoretical texts. Second, whereas the thesis engages with transnational feminist theory and includes selected global films, its analytical scope remains selective rather than complete. Thereby, the films discussed are used as examples to extend the theoretical argument concerning representations

of gender fluidity. Third, the concept of “creativity” in this thesis is approached primarily through literary aesthetics production, performance art, and cultural practices, rather than through the most popular contemporary creative domain, social or digital media. Finally, this research focuses on the theoretical implications of androgyny, fluidity, and performativity rather than on any political debates surrounding them. On this basis, the analysis of this study is interpretive, acknowledging that the impacts of gender fluidity remain context-dependent and contested.

2.2 [Theoretical Framework and Literature Review]

Any meaningful inquiry of gender fluidity and creativity must start with an understanding of the academic and theoretical contexts that can connect Woolf’s and Butler’s ideas. Both thinkers challenge the cultural forces that limit a person’s social, intellectual, and creative opportunities. Together, they provide a fundamental principle for examining creativity as an act that challenges gender norms, disrupts binaries, and reinvents identity as revolutionary. Despite Woolf and Butler providing the key theoretical bases for this research, understanding androgyny, gender fluidity, performativity, and creative identity demands engaging with broader intellectual thoughts that enrich their ideals. Therefore, modernist aesthetics, feminist literary criticism, queer theory, transnational feminism, poststructuralism, and postcolonial criticism contribute essential ideas, offers refined understandings regarding how identity and creativity operate. Thus, the theoretical framework of this

thesis reveals that gendered creativity is not just an experience but a phenomenon.

Woolf debates about women's suffrage through modernity during the early twentieth century, a period marked by political disruption (Goldstone 46). Modernist writers rejected conventional narrative forms and moved toward fragmentation and multiplicity. Modernism questioned the solidity of narrative, language, and identity. Woolf expanded these challenges to a discussion of gender through offering a groundbreaking critique of the patriarchal structures that controlled literary tradition from a feminist perspective. She exposes the ways in which patriarchal structures determine who is allowed to create, who will be remembered, and whose work will be valued because these factors shape the very definition of a male-dominated literary tradition. Woolf's insistence that creativity requires androgyny offers a critique of this tradition, revealing how gender inequality shapes intellectual production. Hence, her critique is not merely literary; it is political.

Woolf asserts that "the androgynous mind is resonant and porous; it transmits emotion without impediment" (102). This conception reframes creativity as a fluid mentality rather than any traditional gendered attribute. The laws of our society are infused with patriarchy. Transcending all the expected confinements that make a gender weak is the only way to enjoy actual creativity. This allows the study to portray Woolf's literary character Orlando not just as a symbol of androgyny or fluidity but also as a subject engaged in the ongoing processes of

gendered performance. *Orlando* explicitly invokes this very idea through the narration of Orlando as a character who possesses both masculine and feminine qualities: “in every human being a vacillation from one sex to the other takes place, and often it is only the clothes that keep the male or female likeness” (Woolf 181).

He moves between male and female qualities and demonstrates that gender is performed through clothes and behavior rather than essentiality. Orlando’s gender identity is particularly focused through clothing. Mahboubeh Moslehi and Nozar Niazi (2012) discuss that “Orlando enacts gender performativity, revealing how identity is constituted through repeated acts rather than innate truth” (5). So, Orlando’s fluid embodiment demonstrates that only outer accessories differ by gender. He seamlessly transforms into a female: “Orlando had become a woman—there is no denying it.” (Woolf 133). This idea challenges the Victorian notion that characterized men and women as naturally different based on intellect and imagination.

Furthermore, Woolf’s formulations of androgyny or fluid subjectivity complicate Butler’s notion of gender performativity. Butler’s theory of performativity, written in the late twentieth century, mocks the recognition of gender, rejecting traditional beliefs as absolute truth. She states in *Gender Trouble* that gender is a result of repetition, which creates the illusion of stability: “Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame” (33). Butler’s work thus appears strong in this context concerning identity

politics, the instability of signification, and sexual difference. In *Gender Trouble*, Butler critiques feminist theories that depend on a coherent category of “woman”. She declares in the chapter “Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire” that social assumptions reinforce the very structures the theorists aim to challenge: “The feminist subject turns out to be discursively constituted by the political system that is supposed to facilitate its emancipation” (Butler 5).

However, performativity does not suggest performance as a voluntary act; rather, it asserts that gender is an effect of cultural norms. In *Undoing Gender*, Butler again points out that gender identities are fluidly determined by social recognition, which can support or deny one’s lived identity; “Recognition becomes a site of power by which the human is differentially produced” (2). This theory throws deep implications for creativity. Butler wrote in a poststructuralist landscape informed by Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and theorists who critiqued the category of gender as a stable biological identity. Her theory of gender performativity develops from the belief that gender is not innate but enacted through socially regulated performances. She draws from Foucault’s understanding of knowledge, power, and discourse while proposing that gender is produced through repeated acts that conform to social expectations. This exposes how power structures shape identity and how creative re-signification can subvert these structures. Poststructuralist thinking, particularly the influence of Foucault, illuminates power, discourse, and subject formation.

According to him, knowledge is connected with power, and politics forms the body. He observes that the body must go through careful discipline. This underpins the analysis of normativity. Transnational feminist critics, such as Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Trinh T. Minh-ha, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, contextualize this theory of global power structures to ensure that gender fluidity must be understood as culturally situated rather than universal. Gender must be understood as historically conditional and socially regulated rather than being biologically fixed. Transnational feminism and the global dimensions of gendered identity critique Western feminist frameworks, which assume general experiences of womanhood and prioritize Euro-American gender paradigms or perspectives. It points out how gender intersects with race, nation, and cultural identity.

This allows the study of gender fluidity and creativity to extend beyond Western contexts and into global spaces where patriarchy, nationalism, religion, and legacies shape gender performance in unique ways. Woolf's arguments in *A Room of One's Own* emerge from a white, upper-middle-class English perspective. Transnational feminist thinkers critique feminist narratives like this that overlook differences among women. This enables this thesis to situate Woolf's androgyny within the broader discussion about privilege, voice, and representation, revealing the limits and possibilities of her creative philosophy. In contexts across South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, gender fluidity often intersects with economic insecurity, state violence, and cultural stigma. In consequence, creativity becomes both empowering and risky.

By calling attention to these intersections, this study widens the global expressions of fluid identity and ponders Western theories within larger artistic and political landscapes. Additionally, queer theory and performing the self, expand Butler's arguments by challenging conventional assumptions and emphasizing the instability of identity categories. Scholars like José Esteban Muñoz conceptualize gender as affective, performative, and fluid, emphasizing how individuals navigate identity through desire, embodiment, and social interaction. Queer theory views performance not merely as theatrical expression but as a way of negotiating identity. Muñoz's idea in *Disidentifications* (1999) explains how marginalized subjects creatively engage with dominant cultural narratives to carve out alternative identities: "Disidentification is a strategy that works on and against dominant ideology" (11). This centers that creativity becomes a site of revolution. It does not become a rejection but becomes a transformation of dominant narratives.

Moreover, Woolf and Butler's works offer grounding for reading literature through a queer lens. Together, they provide a bridge between aesthetic experimentation and theoretical innovation, allowing queer theory to frame creativity as a form of resistance. Muñoz mentions in *Cruising Utopia* (2009) that "Queerness is an ideality," which supports the framing of creativity as re-imagination (1). This aligns with the thesis's main argument that creativity becomes a place of undermining and rethinking where gender norms are rejected and transformed. Additionally, postcolonial theory examines how histories shape identities

and cultural narratives. This is directly connected with the politics of gender representation. In spite of the fact that Woolf and Butler write within Western intellectual traditions, their works also resonate with postcolonial critiques that question how gender intersects with imperialism and cultural erasure.

Additionally, Homi K. Bhabha's theory of cultural hybridity, mimicry, and "the third space" in *The Location of Culture* (1994) notes that non-Western identity is not formed through fixity (113). According to him, language, history, power, negotiation, and translation form the identity of a colonized subject. To this end, creative expressions of non-binary identity in literature, performance, or visual culture become politically significant acts of resistance. Edward Said's work, *Culture and Imperialism* (1994), marks that "No one today is purely one thing. Labels like Indian, or woman, or Muslim, or American are no more than starting-points" (336). He says, "Imperialism consolidated the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale" (Said 407). He thinks, "Nations themselves are narrations" (Said 13). Though neither Woolf nor Butler directly engages with postcolonial theory, their ideas contribute to global conversations concerning identity.

Woolf's critique parallels these postcolonial exclusions, and Butler's concept is used widely in non-Western contexts to rethink gender beyond colonial binaries. Together, they allow this thesis to analyze identity as a performative and political practice through which gender is continuously compromised and resisted. By integrating these

theoretical perspectives, the thesis constructs a framework that treats gender fluidity as an aesthetic regulation. Therefore, creativity emerges not as an escape from social norms but as a mode of negotiating, resisting, and reconfiguring them. This theoretical synthesis enables the thesis to analyze Woolf and Butler not merely as historical figures but as interlocutors in an ongoing discourse on gender, identity, and creative becoming. Nonetheless, creativity is frequently discussed as resistance in feminist, postcolonial, transnational, and queer scholarship. Very few studies theorize creativity itself as a mode of gender fluidity. This study tries to clarify that creativity does not merely reflect fluid identity but produces it. Hence, the literature review of this research tries to establish an argumentative discussion among theorists and critics who have interrogated gender, identity, and creativity as an unstable issue and a culturally mediated formation.

Chapter 3

[Androgyny and Performativity: Creativity as Transformative Practice]

In the present era, gender is no longer viewed as fixed, but rather as a performative process. Due to this, identity becomes an act that is continually negotiated through narrative, embodiment, and aesthetic manner. So, artistic expression becomes a performance through which gender is continually remade. Therefore, Androgyny should be considered as a critical and creative concept. This thesis employs androgyny as a central conceptual lens through which creativity, gender fluidity, and identity formation are investigated. The study aims to provide a prolonged analysis of androgyny, explained by Woolf in *A Room of One's Own* and reinterpreted through later theoretical frameworks. Rather than treating androgyny as a static blending of masculine and feminine features, this paper prioritizes that androgyny functions as an advanced creative condition that enables an alternative style of artistic expression. Having said that, it has often been misunderstood as a neutral middle ground between masculinity and femininity, which risks weakening its radical potential. Acknowledging relatable standpoints, this study identifies that androgyny is not only about balance but also about mobility, transmissivity, and imaginative freedom. When read alongside various scholarships, Woolf's androgyny becomes a pioneer of

contemporary ideas of gender fluidity and performativity, while remaining rooted in modernist aesthetics.

Moreover, Woolf introduces and reconfigures androgyny for feminist modernism. Woolf's theory of androgyny is inseparable from her modernist aesthetics. This idea challenges biological determinism by rejecting that creativity is inherently gendered. Modernism's rejection of extended narrative, fixed perspective, and authoritative voice parallels Woolf's rejection of gender categories. Modernist aesthetics emphasizes fragmentation, subjectivity, and multiplicity. These qualities also align with queer and feminist understandings of gender. As Goldman comments in "The Feminist Criticism of Virginia Woolf" (2012), "Woolf's stylistic experimentation is itself a modernist gesture that resists masculine rationalism and narrative closure" (70). The fragmented consciousness in Woolf's fiction mirrors the fluid nature of identity. Nonetheless, this attention to androgyny emerges long before Woolf, appearing in classical philosophy, Renaissance art, Romantic poetry, and nineteenth-century psychology. Plato's *Symposium* (1989) depicts androgynous beings as original, powerful entities whose division leads to longing and incompleteness. Such mythologies are influenced by romantic writers like Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who conceived androgyny as a unity of opposing forces within the creative mind (1835). Unlike Plato's harmonious ideal or Coleridge's masculine-coded imagination, Woolf's androgynous mind critiques gendered power structures that restrict true creativity. It becomes a symbol of psychological freedom,

allowing writers to transcend binary thinking and access a more fluid mode of imagination. Woolf believes that “A great mind is androgynous” (102).

With this, in feminist-queer terms, Woolf challenges strict binaries. She argues that “the writer who “… allows her mind to be androgynous, she will have a fuller view of humanity” (103). Here, gender fluidity is an ideal and mental androgyny that transcends fixed categories. It provides a theoretical conceptual ground that gender roles are culturally imposed and can be changed by the androgynous mind. Jane Goldman emphasizes in *The Feminist Aesthetics of Virginia Woolf* that Woolf’s feminist intervention expands beyond context into literary form itself. She contends that “Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own* is not just an argument about subject matter (women’s economic and intellectual independence) but also a formal innovation” (Goldman 1998). According to her, Woolf represents a feminist literary form by blurring boundaries between essay, fiction, and lecture, and by utilizing narrative strategies. “Woolf’s modernist experimentation, fragmented narration, interior monologue, and temporal fluidity function as a resistance to what she describes as the “masculine” rigidity of traditional narrative forms” (Goldman 105).

This challenges the assumption that creativity is gender-specific and that by only combining them, one can be truly creative. Woolf writes that being “pure and simple” man or woman is fatal: “…it is fatal for anyone who writes to think of their sex. It is fatal to be a man or woman pure and simple; one must be woman-manly or man-womanly” (102). This

celebrates inner androgyny, a mind that embraces both masculine and feminine perspectives. Woolf then argues that “The androgynous mind is resonant and porous” (102). This idea encourages transmitting emotion and creativity past gender lines. Woolf’s “androgynous mind” has further generated more scholarly debates. Drawing from Coleridge, Woolf insists that creative excellence emerges when “the two powers, male and female, live in harmony together” (102). This emphasis on fluidity and movement in gendered identities tries to resist essentialism. Early critics, such as Adele Cassigneul, interpreted this in “Cross-Dressing as Ambisexual Style: Queer Twists in Virginia Woolf’s *Orlando*” (2019) as a blending of masculine and feminine traits and presented it as an aesthetic ideal (45).

Even so, recent scholarship challenges this harmonious reading. Toril Moi, in her influential book *Sexual/Textual Politics* (1985), places Woolf’s androgyny within continental feminist critiques that express the undermining of fixed oppositions rather than the synthesis of male and female traits. She mentions that Woolf’s androgyny is an undermining force that disrupts binary logic. According to this perspective, androgyny functions as movement rather than balance. Moi further records what early feminist critic Showalter talks about: “balanced androgyny that covers the deeper textual meaning. Woolf is doing this to damage metaphysical dualisms, including the binary oppositions” (6). Moi observes that Woolf’s crucial concept of androgyny rejects fixed gender identities precisely because they are “falsifying metaphysical

oppositions," and instead participates in a deconstructive feminist politics that undermines rigid gender ideologies rather than uniting them in harmony (9). It is not a balanced synthesis of male and female traits but a part of the poststructuralist dismantling of binary identities. This challenges the definitions of gender. Such facts reveal gender as socially scripted rather than naturally determined.

Thus, Woolf's androgyny is less mythic and more political. This challenges patriarchal literary history and envisions a world in which creative minds are not trapped within gender norms. She claims that when a writer becomes overly conscious of their gender, creativity becomes blocked: "It is fatal for anyone who writes to think of their sex" (Woolf 102). Feminist critics like Jane Allcroft have debated whether Woolf's androgyny omits women's lived experiences by encouraging transcendence over political struggle (2015). However, early feminist readings interpreted androgyny as an idealized humanist state, potentially minimizing the necessity of women's material oppression. Yet, later scholarship complicates this critique by tracing Woolf's insistence on material conditions, economic independence, education, and privacy as prerequisites for creative freedom. Thus, androgyny does not neutralize gendered experience; rather, it allows the writer to move beyond restrictive identities, which are rarely acknowledged as material injustices.

Importantly, Woolf does not advocate for the elimination of gender difference but for its refusal as a hierarchical system. The androgynous

mind is not genderless; it is gender-flexible. This flexibility enables writers to imagine perspectives beyond their socially assigned roles, thereby expanding the ethical and creative scope of literature. In creative space, identity becomes fluid across literary and philosophical traditions. *To the Lighthouse* (1927) also explores queer desire and blurred gender identity needed in creativity through the female artist Lily Briscoe. She carries a secret longing for Mrs. Ramsay, and her last illustration serves as evidence of this lesbian desire. Hence, Lily's creative process is not confined by gendered labels which suggests that the inner mind can go against gender binaries in order to be creative.

In *Orlando*, Woolf uses secular fluidity and narrative play to damage conventional biography and gender history. Orlando lives for centuries, changes sex, and moves over roles without psychological disturbance. Woolf writes, "But in every other respect, Orlando remained precisely as he had been" (133). This statement deconstructs the assumption that gender transformation must demand a fundamental change in selfhood. *Orlando* is often drawn as playful or fantastical, but such descriptions risk overlooking its critical force. Cassigneul says in "Virginia Woolf's Androgynous Vision" that "The novel exposes how gender identity is socially enforced rather than naturally inherited. Orlando's experiences vary not because of internal essence but because of external constraints: property laws and social expectations" (2011). Woolf, therefore, remarks on gender as a visual and performative construct which echoes Butler's idea.

Gender Trouble, therefore, transforms feminist theory by rejecting the distinction between sex as biological and gender as cultural. Butler famously argues that gender formulation exists only through repeated social validation that produces the illusion of coherence. Butler herself clarifies that performativity does not imply “voluntarism;” rather, gender is “a repetition and a ritual” regulated by social norms (191). However, Identity-based feminism can fear that unsettling the category of “woman” would undermine political solidarity. Queer theory, on the other hand, embraces Butler’s framework as a means of exposing heteronormative power structures. Therefore, Butler’s theory of gender performativity challenges the essentialist understandings of identity. Butler describes how imperfect repetition opens space for creativity through parody, exaggeration, refusal; exposing the fragility of normative gender identities. Hence, performativity can redefine creativity.

According to Butler, creativity emerges within the constraints of repetition, offering re-signification. In *Undoing Gender*, Butler extends her earlier work by addressing the ethical conditions of recognition and livability. Gender norms not only regulate identity but also determine whose lives are considered understandable and worthy of protection. Though scholars note a shift in Butler’s emphasis from sabotage to vulnerability: “Gender fluidity is not inherently free; it can also expose individuals to violence and erasure” (Sadjadi and Hojabri 20). Anyhow, Butler maintains that identity is always unstable. Creativity, in this context, becomes a means of considering recognition which offers

alternative ways of self-articulation within restraining norms. This ethical dimension resonates with Woolf's insistence on intellectual freedom.

Society does not give women equal opportunities by which they can create their own path of success. If a woman thinks of doing something out of the box of expectations, she is discouraged by family, relatives, society, and even myths. Ultimately, the societal idea of feminine gender makes her inferior. Strong mindset and proper outcomes are only expected from males. They are permitted to do simple activities of daily life, which are often unimaginable for a woman. No matter how educated or independent they become, before taking any decision, women are forced to be in a dilemma. If any woman becomes determined to achieve certain dreams, she is either injured or used by the very society that claims to protect her. Also, career-oriented working women are often considered poor mothers and bad homemakers. Society often thinks that an educated woman can never be a good wife, a good cook, or a better caregiver.

It is not only patriarchy, religion, and gender suppression that become the tools for binding women mentally, physically, and intellectually. Proper salary, opportunity, or respect is not equally served on a female's plate as it is always on a man's. Gaining freedom from these norms is the only way for women to achieve their dreams. Woolf exposes how economic inequality, social expectations, and gender norms put restrictions on women's creativity. Her major argument for "a room of one's own" symbolizes the need for material and intellectual autonomy

(Woolf 5). These qualities mark Woolf's interest in fluid identities. Sketched in *A Room of One's Own*, her concept of androgyny advocates for a blending of masculinity and femininity as a necessity for artistic creativity: "Each of us has two powers to control everything, the power of a male and the power of a female" (Woolf 102). This intuition challenges the ideas of gender by suggesting that creative brilliance emerges only when the mind is not constrained by rigid masculine or feminine roles.

Hence, by placing Butler's theory in conversation with Woolf's literary representations, it can be demonstrated that repetition itself can become a site of creative intervention. Other than searching for the true self, creativity encourages experimentation with individual identity. By doing so, artistic expression, such as writing, performing, storytelling, or imagining, becomes a way of forming new selves. Creativity operates in liminality, a transitional zone where norms are dismissed, and new identities can emerge. Woolf's androgynous mind exists in this type of liminal state, free from constraints, and Butler's performativity thrives in this space where repeated acts can redefine identity. Therefore, creativity becomes not only representational but constitutive through acts by showing that gendered identities evolve and resist.

3.1 [Fluidity within Literary Canon and Philosophical Execution]

Androgyny is a mental thought, and performativity is bodily performance. To completely understand the significance of gender

performativity within creative expression, this study extends its scope across aesthetic, literary, and philosophical traditions that have historically shaped the ideas of identity, embodiment, and the artistic self. Woolf and Butler stand as two transformational intellectual figures, yet the roots of their ideas reach even further into discourses on androgyny, aesthetic experience, and the nature of selfhood. At the same time, their arguments continue into contemporary debates surrounding queer identity, bodily autonomy, and cultural representation. By this means, situating their work within the broader ideology reveals how the interrogation of gender has always been linked to questions of creativity and possibility.

In spite of the fact that Woolf does not directly use the language of queerness, contemporary queer theory allows for a productive rereading of her theory of androgyny. Butler's theory of gender performativity provides a useful base for understanding this insight. She describes that gender is enacted and is not innate: "Gender is the repeated stylization of the body" (33). Orlando's frequent playing with clothing and cross-dressing shows how gender identity is a social construct rather than a natural phenomenon. This claim resonates with the depiction of gender dependent on costume, behavior, and social recognition. From this perspective, androgyny can be understood as an interruption in the repetition of normative gender acts. The novel's sex change transforms Orlando from male to female midway, providing a literally androgynous perspective. Orlando's shifting presentation also exposes the uncertainty

of gender norms, revealing that what appears natural is, in fact, socially rehearsed. He embodies that gender can never be fixed. Woolf's androgyny anticipates Butler's assertion that identity is "an effect of discourse rather than a cause" (34).

Even though Butler was writing decades later, Orlando's shifting identity prefigures Butler's claim in her essay, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" (1988), that gender is "a stylized repetition of acts" (520). Orlando's gender presentation functions as a narrative form of drag, revealing a fluid gendered experience. This illustrates how creative texts can function as a performative critique of regulations. It intersects solely with performativity. Orlando performs gender differently in various historical periods, revealing that identity is produced through acts rather than biological essence. The novel also anticipates Butler's interest in drag, parody, and performative selfhood, demonstrating how gender roles are learned, enacted, and sometimes subverted. Butler's discussion of drag in the chapter "Subversive Bodily Acts" provides a clear illustration of performativity's subversive situation. It is a pastiche that can expose that gender norms are artificial. Drag performance occupies a crucial place in Butler's analysis. She signals that drag exposes "the imitative structure of gender itself" (137). Drag performances are not simply imitations of women. Butler reveals that by exaggerating gender roles, drag exposes that all gender identities are performative imitations.

It exemplifies how repetition can be creatively reworked to reveal the fluidity of identity. This is particularly relevant to creativity, as it

reveals how exaggerated performance can dismiss the supposed authenticity of gender identities. Creativity in this way becomes a site of resignification rather than mere representation. Though Bakhtiar Sadjadi and Sirwe Hojabri (2019) state: “Woolf’s concern with artistic freedom differs from Butler’s focus on political destruction” (8). It allows this thesis to position *Orlando* as a literary experiment that anticipates but does not replicate queer theory, thereby opening a creative space where gender becomes fluid. *Orlando* aligns Woolf with queer theoretical concerns because, rather than transcending gender, Woolf exposes its instability. Orlando’s androgynous mind becomes a site of resistance against identity categories. This thesis adopts this interpretation, reading androgyny as an early articulation of gender fluidity that directly informs modes of creation. The androgynous character, Orlando, writes poetry. His intellectual thoughts are never interrupted because of his gendered transformations. He thinks and writes equally well as a male or a female. Gender fluidity makes his creative perspective stronger rather than weakening it. He writes a poem named “The Oak Tree” out of his love for nature and poetry. This tree becomes an absolute, unchangeable representation of Orlando himself.

He transcends gender, time, and identity. This transformation is narrated without moral judgment, thereby subverting dominant narratives of gender preservation. Hermione Lee (1998) states that, “Introducing a protagonist that embodies both genders, *Orlando* challenges the strict division of genders. The novel’s examination of

androgyny directly challenges social structures that give men and women set duties" (228). This narrative strategy normalizes gender transformation and breaks biological determinism. Woolf observes that "in every human being a vacillation from one sex to the other takes place" (181). This aligns with Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's formula presented in *Tendencies* (1993): "Queer is a continuing moment, movement, motive—recurrent, eddying, troublant" (8). This formulation illuminates queerness as an unstable process, reinforcing the discussion of affective and non-fixed identities as Butler points out.

Furthermore, *Bodies That Matter* (1993), written by Butler, maps the body as a discursive construction. She expands her argument that gender is performative by focusing on the category of sex. Butler radicalizes her earlier research by arguing that sex is produced through discourse and the body does not have meaning: "There is no reference to a pure body which is not at the same time a further formation of that body" (10). According to her, bodies are interpreted through social categories as masculine, feminine, normal, and abnormal. These categories give bodies meaning. Thus, bodies becomes meaningful by repeated naming and regulation. They "matter" because they are produced as meaningful within the systems of power. Some bodies that do not fit into accepted norms, such as intersex, queer, or non-reproductive bodies, are often treated as abnormal. But these bodies expose the instability of the binary system. Butler upholds which bodies really matter. To him, queer bodies do not matter, but the mind should

not be confined to gender roles. This destabilizes the binary between natural and cultural gender.

This heterosexual model requires bodies to be coherent: “The regulatory norms of ‘sex’ work in a performative fashion to constitute the materiality of bodies” (Butler 2). Butler then suggests that the implication for literary studies is crucial for understanding that bodies are “textualized” surfaces and become sites where ideologies are written. According to her, the body is shaped by language and power. Individuals do not simply have bodies; society tells them what bodies should mean. “Male” and “female” are not neutral categories because they are produced by culture and law. Hence, identity is not biology; it is an analysis. So, fluidity emerges not just as rebellion but also as exposure of the system’s instability. Thus, gender fluidity becomes possible because bodies do not have fixed meanings.

Anyway, Woolf’s concept of androgyny differs from Butler’s ideas in major ways. Woolf illuminates imaginative freedom and aesthetic wholeness, whereas Butler remarks on power, regulation, and constraint. This difference does not weaken their connection; it strengthens this. Woolf provides the creative instinct that Butler theorizes philosophically. As a result, androgyny becomes the imaginative space where performativity is visible. Despite its radical potential, the concept of androgyny has faced sustained feminist critique. As discussed earlier, some scholars think that androgyny risks neutralizing gender difference at a time when women’s voices require amplification rather than

termination. From this viewpoint, the call to transcend gender may unintentionally reinforce male norms globally. Anyhow, critics often overlook Woolf's historical context and rhetorical strategy. Woolf does not propose androgyny as a social authorization but as a creative condition.

Woolf occupies an underlying position regarding women's exclusion from literary history and the material conditions of creativity. In *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf famously asserts that women must be financially and mentally independent if they want to produce creativity (4). Feminist critics have interpreted this declaration as both a literal demand for economic independence and a symbolic call for intellectual autonomy. Her emphasis on women's absence from literary history is exemplified through the figure of Judith Shakespeare in *A Room of One's Own*, who underscores her awareness of structural inequality because the imaginative freedom of androgyny becomes possible only after the recognition of injustice. Woolf's description of the imaginary Judith Shakespeare is the most essential aspect of the text because, through this, Woolf critiques patriarchal literary history. She examines how women have been positioned as marginal figures rather than creators.

The fictional character of Judith becomes an image of suppressed female genius, a reminder that creative potential is shaped not by innate ability but by social conditions. Judith's pregnancy and suicide are the tragic climax of Woolf's fictional thought, which shows that female genius commonly faces tragedy. She states, "Women cannot write the plays of

Shakespeare… it is unthinkable that any woman in Shakespeare's day should have had Shakespeare's genius" (Woolf 39-41). This showcase that female bodies often face dangerous difficulties for being in the same field as men. Thus, Judith is not only an imagined sister of Shakespeare but also a critique of historical structures that rejected women's artistic agency. Woolf uses her to argue that literary greatness is a product of material, educational, and social privilege. She exposes that women's absence from literary history is the result of gendered power relations, not inferiority.

Woolf's critique of literary tradition considers that gender norms not only shape creative opportunities but also regulate which voices are heard, valued, or preserved. Elaine Showalter identifies Woolf as a pioneer who exposed how patriarchal institutions systematically denied women the conditions necessary for artistic production in *A Literature of Their Own* (1977). She is also widely credited with the term "gynocriticism," an approach that focuses on women's writing, which must be analyzed through women's perspectives rather than male-centered formations described in "Toward a Feminist Poetics" (1979). Showalter points out that feminist criticism "has to be not only a political act but a cultural one, an act of rediscovering lost voices" (125).

She slightly critiques Woolf's feminist argument and emphasis on androgyny, the implication that a writer should transcend specific female experience. She reads this aspect as potentially depoliticizing, which might divert attention from women's particular social and literary

circumstances. Showalter also observes that Woolf's thinking of "androgyny" functions as a means of avoiding battle with female experience and emotion: "Androgyny was the myth that helped her evade confrontation with her own painful femaleness and enabled her to choke and repress her anger and ambition" (1977). She criticizes the theorization of male vs female brain, which illustrates women as lesser men.

Therefore, Woolf's critique of the male-dominated literary tradition serves as the answer to every question regarding the exclusion of women's voices from institutional creative histories. Woolf reveals that gender norms shape both social life and literary production. Her call for autonomy, economic independence, and mental freedom provides an early basis for later feminist ideas that emphasize the socially constructed nature of identity. She shows women's place in literature and studies women as people rather than in relation to men. Butler, on the other hand, describes the instability of gender categories. That is why, for Butler, drag performance is not merely theatrical; it is politically significant because it exposes the imitative nature of gender. When drag challenges fixed gender identities, it reveals that gender is a form of systemic habits.

In addition, contemporary feminist and queer scholars insist that androgyny should be reclaimed as a challenge to binary logic rather than a contradiction of difference. Androgyny aligns with non-binary and gender-fluid identities that resist categorization. When read through

transnational feminist frameworks, androgyny can also be understood as culturally inflected rather than universally defined, adapting to different historical and social contexts. The major knowledge of transnationalism is that ideas and individuality can transcend borders. This echoes Gloria Anzaldúa's theory of the "New Mestiza" (1987) of *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. This is a consciousness that is able to go beyond social boundaries, embracing the fluidity of identity. It underlines the drifting situation of experiencing multiple selfhood. Anzaldúa emphasizes that navigating multiple identities calls for a challenge and strength. This advocates for a proper understanding of the homeless self. Displacement, memory, and history focus on this borderlessness. Moreover, psychological and emotional detachment of gender and the body highlights this rootlessness of transnationalism. This challenges traditional expectations and paves new paths for itself, challenging social beliefs.

Hence, creativity operates within power structures but retains the capacity to rework them. The act of writing, performing, or imagining becomes a political gesture. Feminist critics working from Marxist and postcolonial perspectives have problematized this framework. Divya Singh (2024) states, "Woolf's emphasis on privacy, leisure, and education reflects a class privilege unavailable to many women globally" (240). Then Spivak also notes that feminist discourse must attend to "epistemic violence," whereby dominant narratives erase marginalized voices (24). She refers to this as the way in which historical narratives erase the path of gathering knowledge. This critique does not disprove Woolf's

arguments but demands that her determinations can be contextualized within transnational feminist frameworks.

3.2 [Creative Becoming, Negotiation of Gender and Cinematic Resistance]

Androgyny is inseparable from Woolf's ethical vision of creativity. The fluid mind enables empathy, multiplicity, and relational thinking. Refusing firm identity boundaries, it allows literature to imagine lives beyond normative recognition. This ethical dimension resonates with Butler's later concern for livable lives in *Undoing Gender*, where she maps that recognition determines whose lives are considered human (2). Butler's critique of binary categories echoes Woolf's reimagining of androgyny, but she grounds her argument in poststructuralist theory rather than aesthetic metaphor. Where Woolf imagines unity, Butler sees instability; where Woolf advocates for imaginative blending, Butler exposes the artificiality of the categories. These contrasts enrich the thesis's framework by demonstrating different but complementary approaches to dismantling gender boundaries.

Creativity, in this framework, becomes an ethical practice. The writer does not merely represent identity but participates in its reconfiguration. Androgyny facilitates this process by loosening the grip of gender norms on imagination. As Woolf invokes, when the mind is free from gender conflict, it can "transmit emotion without impediment," which allows for more inclusive and expansive forms of creative

expression (102). Hence, androgyny in Woolf's work is not a passive ideal but an active creative force. In *A Room of One's Own* and *Orlando*, Woolf articulates androgyny as a mode of thinking that resists binary identity and enables artistic innovation. When read alongside feminist and queer theory, particularly Butler's theory of performativity, androgyny emerges as a foundational concept for understanding gender fluidity in acts of creation. By framing androgyny as creative becoming rather than fixed identity, this research establishes the groundwork for subsequent analysis of performativity and gender fluidity.

On the other hand, Butler acknowledges the ethical limits of performativity. In *Undoing Gender*, she emphasizes that not all distinctions of gender norms are socially practical. Recognition is what determines whose performances are comprehensive and whose are erased or punished. She writes, "To be undone by another is a primary necessity" (23). This ethical complexion is essential for understanding performativity not as limitless freedom but as a negotiation with power. Language also plays a central role in Butler's theory of performativity. According to her, speech acts, naming practices, and discursive repetition contribute to the production of gendered identities. By referencing J. L. Austin's theory of performative utterances, Butler argues that language not only describes reality but also helps to establish it (1975). Literary texts, narrative voice, and stylistic repetition equally shape identity.

According to Butler, narrative form itself can be performative. Likewise, poststructuralism reveals how discourse, language, and symbolic structures shape subjectivity while leaving space for creative reinterpretation. By repeating and revising gendered traditions, literature participates in the production and undoing of identity. As a result, creativity becomes a practice of reproduction with difference. It does not operate outside power but within it. It negotiates and reworks the dominant scripts. Creativity becomes a space where global and local discourses intersect, producing hybrid forms of gender expression. Moreover, gender fluidity is not a modern invention, and it has gained new visibility through cultural production. Writers, artists, and performers often challenge binary gendered frameworks through narrative experimentation, hybridity, and performance. These practices echo Woolf's insistence that rigid identity categories limit creative potential. Butler's concept of recognizing ability remains central to these contemporary debates. She argues that lives become livable only when they are "socially intelligible" (Butler 2).

Butler's theory emphasizes that gender is not merely repeated acts; it is inscribed on the body and enacted through everyday life. This embodied performativity allows the subject to creatively resist and subvert fixed norms. Woolf's attention to psychological freedom complements this idea by illustrating how the internal life of the artist can challenge external structures. Creativity thus becomes both an internal and external phenomenon that extends into imaginative possibility. Additionally, marginalized identities often rely on creativity

for asserting their true existence. Drag acts, poetry, fiction, dance, theatre, and cinema all offer different ways in which normative understandings of gender can be resisted. Artistic lives of transgender performers and nonconforming gendered artists, creativity serves as both livelihood and self-affirmation.

Ultimately, gender can be considered as an ongoing performance essential to artistic selfhood. Woolf's literary imagination, which anticipates Butler's theory of performativity, offers a clear understanding of *Ghetuputra Komola* and *Joyland*'s performative body and social stigma. Moreover, androgyny in *Ghetuputra Komola* and *Joyland* is not just gender ambiguity, but also a cultural, aesthetic, and political condition. Taken together, the two films trace a historical evolution of performativity used for creativity in South Asian cultural narratives. *Ghetuputra Komola* shows how androgyny and performativity were tolerated only as a creative spectacle, and *Joyland* shows androgyny as creativity, performativity, identity, desire, and resistance. However, they both agree on one haunting truth that patriarchal society desires androgyny and performativity aesthetically but punishes it socially. Collectively, *Ghetuputra Komola* and *Joyland* exemplify how creative expression can offer new possibilities of identity that normative society does not accept. Both films reveal that identity is always culturally mediated and creatively constructed.

Ghetu performers of *Ghetuputra Komola* rely on the traditional stage to inhabit feminine roles. Their adoption of feminine roles being

males, disrupts binary expectations. Similarly, for Biba in *Joyland*, her room becomes the stage where she embodies her identity without apology. She embodies a creative self that is not bound to a singular identity. She is a feminine figure who adapts masculine qualities more prominently than other male characters of the film, even though she faces violence outside. Thus, comparative research of these films portrays the creative nature of fluidity. In *Ghetuputra Komola*, it is forcefully exploitative, and in *Joyland,* it is expressively chosen. The relation of power in *Ghetuputra Komola* is controlled by patriarchy. On the other hand, in *Joyland,* it is resisting patriarchy. *Ghetuputra Komola* presents the body as a site of consumption, where *Joyland* presents the body as a site of becoming. The outcome of *Ghetuputra Komola* is desire and death, where the outcome of *Joyland* is survival with loss. *Ghetuputra Komola* exposes feudal cruelty, and *Joyland* gives a critique of modern heteronormativity.

In *Ghetuputra Komola*, performativity is imposed, fragile, and tragic. Komola is a biologically male teenager named Jahir, trained to perform femininely for the pleasure of male patrons, who are the zamindars or local landowners. He travels with his father's ghetu dance team for entertainment performances. He is forced to dress and behave like a lady performer, and while performing changes his name to Komola. Ultimately, while performing, his body becomes a site where gender is performed for survival, not chosen for self-expression or identity, where art, gender, and morality collide. To add, the colonial backdrop and

gender control are the central themes of the film. It situates gender performance within a colonial setting. Ghetu tradition was a trend of music in Bengali folk culture that emerged almost 250 years ago in colonial Bengal. Thus, Komola's high-pitched voice, delicate gestures, ornaments, and clothing create an aesthetic in-betweenness that is neither fully "boy" nor socially acknowledged as "girl."

Here, the fluid body is used as a spectacle where androgyny becomes alienated rather than liberated, culturally produced, not personally claimed, economically motivated, and tied to poverty and power. This aligns with a key literary understanding of androgyny as forced hybridity, where the body is made to cross gender lines to sustain oppressive systems. This exemplifies loss of innocence and gendered violence. Unlike Woolfian androgyny, which liberates the mind, Komola's androgyny destroys the self. Puberty threatens his value. Once masculinity emerges, he becomes disposable. Komola's androgyny exposes the hypocrisy of patriarchy. His eventual death signifies how patriarchal cultures tolerate gender fluidity only when it serves male desire. It consumes gender ambiguity but refuses to protect gender-nonconforming lives.

Joyland offers a radically different portrayal of performitivity that is rooted in desire, agency, and becoming, rather than force. Also, androgyny plays the role of a self-authored performance in this film. The main character, Biba, the trans dancer, embodies fluidity not as confusion but as confidence. Her body, movements, and stage presence

blur masculine and feminine codes, especially through dance, a space where gender becomes expressive rather than fixed. Her androgyny is chosen, not enforced, fluid, not temporary, public and political, not hidden. The film illustrates androgyny vs. domestic femininity through Biba. In contrast with Mumtaz, a character of this film, trapped in reproductive femininity, Biba's androgyny becomes a threat to normative family structures.

This echoes queer and feminist theories where androgyny sabotages the idea that gender must align with biology or social function. Another main character of this movie, Haider, represents psychological androgyny. Haider's androgyny is internal and emotional. In consequence, he resists traditional masculinity because he is gentle, passive, desiring rather than dominating. His attraction to Biba is not merely sexual but symbolic. They portray a world where gender is livable outside forced roles. Haider embodies the "feminized male" under patriarchy, a subject caught between obedience and selfhood, an androgynous psyche unable to survive norms. The film suggests that society punishes not only trans bodies but anyone who desires gendered freedom. It also incorporates gender fluidity for artistic freedom.

Also, the landlord's wife in *Ghetuputa Komola* and Haider's wife, Mumtaz of *Joyland*, demonstrate the "new women" trope of Eastern nationalist thought. The landlord's wife is often forced to accessorize Komola before her performance. She does this unwillingly for her husband's sake. She is also forced to stay silent when her husband

molests Komola. Consequently, Mumtaz embodies the voiceless, obedient wife and daughter-in-law who sacrifices her dream for her family. Though the landlord's wife takes revenge in the last scene of the film, Mumtaz does not show anything similar. To add, even after taking her revenge by killing Komola with a well-thought-out plan, the landlord's wife still remains in her obedient, silent wife's role. Her situation does not portray a permanent change.

Postcolonial theorist Partha Chatterjee reinforces this situation by exploring how gender becomes a regulatory mechanism in colonial discourses, where women are often framed as symbolic bearers of tradition while being denied agency. In most societies, the regulation of gender is tied to preserving cultural identity under colonial or postcolonial pressures. Chatterjee says, "The woman is subjected to a new patriarchy, which seeks to 'protect' her through a moral discourse that restricts her mobility in the name of cultural authenticity" (131). Accordingly, gender fluidity in postcolonial contexts can collide with nationalist projects that rely on rigid gender norms to maintain social order. According to Chatterjee, men often take the lead in being the leaders of the outer world while confining women to the house.

Chatterjee's criticism, "Whose Imagined Community?" (1991) talks about the inner/outer dichotomy of postcolonial nationalist ideology. Theoretically, the outer domain was associated with the material world, which consists of modern institutions of European superiority, such as the state, economy, administration, science, and education, totally

borrowed from the West. According to Chatterjee, this was the sphere in which Indians accepted Western superiority and modernized accordingly. The inner domain was associated with culture, spirituality, morality, language, and women. Chatterjee criticizes that nationalists claimed cultural sovereignty in the inner space. According to him, Indians believed that although the West is superior materially, Eastern spiritual morality, embodied by their women, is more superior.

According to Chatterjee, national identity is rooted in indigenous culture, religion, and traditions. The inner domain of the nationalist project was seen as a uniquely non-Western, protected space where pre-colonial cultural identity was preserved and developed. Cultural nationalism thrived here. The reimagining of women's roles, traditional practices, and vernacular literature became essential to this project. Women were often seen as protectors of tradition and became a symbolic phenomenon that tied gender with national identity. Through this description, Chatterjee criticized how Indian nationalism both resisted colonial domination and preserved patriarchy by domesticating the idea of women's emancipation. This supports a hybrid model of nationalism, which consists of the urban, educated middle-class Bhadraloks and limitedly modern Bhadramahilas in Bengal. They are partially upgraded, traditional beings, shaped by colonial modernity and indigenous forms.

Chatterjee's essay "The Nationalist Resolution of the Women's Question" (1990), addresses how Indian nationalism engaged with the "woman question" during the colonial period. They were not liberating

women, but were strategically reshaping gender roles to serve the nationalist project. Drawing from both anti-colonial and postcolonial theory, Chatterjee critiques how the nation-building process negotiated modernity and tradition. They wanted to educate women, but not in a way that challenges their traditional roles. They believed in modernizing the nation, keeping the ideal woman as a symbol of purity, spirituality, and devotion. This was an embracement of selective modernity, accepting material progress while protecting indigenous culture. Thus, according to Chatterjee, Indian nationalism reframed womanhood not as a liberated subject, but as a site of cultural protector.

This “new woman” is modern, literate, but only to be a better performer in the home while nurturing children, maintaining morality, protecting chastity, and supporting the nationalist cause through sacrifice. She will remain publicly invisible, and this was thought of as a form of strength, not weakness. Hence, Chatterjee confirms that this “new woman” becomes a cultural allegory. She is disciplined, domesticated, spiritual, and above all, a symbol rather than an agent. Nationalism, on a surface level, claims to solve the question of women not through liberation but through domestication. But Chatterjee notes that due to this very fact, the question is not solved, and it is still an ongoing process. He exposes that patriarchy and nationalism formed an alliance, using women as the symbolic boundary between tradition and modernity.

Trinh T. Minh-ha (1989) challenges the universalist and Eurocentric feminist frameworks by emphasizing difference, displacement, hybridity, and the politics of representation. “There is no such thing as a neutral, objective position from which one can speak” (Minh-ha 38). Her work *Woman, Native, Other* critiques how Western feminist discourse often speaks for “Third World women,” because of cultural, historical, and political specificity: “Difference is not a division between cultures but a process of interaction” (Minh-ha 14).

This clearly supports transnational feminist arguments against universalism. Transnational feminist theory draws attention to cultural uniqueness and power unevenness. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's creations, “Can The Subaltern Speak?” (1988) and “Three Women’s Texts and a Critique of Imperialism” (2014) address this issue of the subaltern’s speaking through mediation and expose how the marginalized voices are erased by the elites (28). She brings out how dominant discourses silence these unique marginalized voices, a concern that resonates with Woolf’s fictional Judith and Butler’s discussion of unrecognizable lives. Spivak furthers her idea and questions whether marginalized subjects can speak within dominant discourses, asking, “Can the subaltern speak?” (271). She warns that theoretical models must remain attentive to context or else they reproduce the exclusions they try to critique (24). Thus, while portraying creative fluidity, the films also showcase reality of colonial gender dichotomy.

3.3 [Gender Performance and Creativity against Social Normativity]

In *Ghetuputra Komola*, the scenes before Komola's performance show him being trained to behave like a woman. These behaviors are not innate. They are inserted into him through repetition. These scenes reveal that femininity is taught and learned rather than naturally possessed. This visualizes Butler's claim of performativity. It exposes Butler's theorization of the imitative structure of gender because it is a theatrical performance here. Komola becomes an example of the idea that gender is something one does, not something one is. Yet, unlike the subversive act of drag, Komola's dance lacks agency. During the performance, his body turns into a site where gender is performed for economic survival. His gendered performance is linked with class vulnerability. This performativity is permitted only within theatrical bounds. Komola's performance also aligns with Orlando, where he is seen seamlessly turning into a woman with a change of attire. Through this, the movie demonstrates that gender is a technique and a costume. It is not an essence or any natural truth. Humayun Ahmed's humanism often focused on marginal figures and outcasts. Ahmed shows that society produces gender roles and then punishes those who embody them well.

When Komola dances, the landlord gazes at him with desire, yet calls him a boy. This gaze turns Komola's body into property because here, power operates through pleasure. Komola's treatment in the landlord's household reveals that gender fluidity can be tolerated only as

spectacle but not as identity. Komola's costume and trained gestures produce a female persona for the male spectators. The choreography makes Komola recognized as a "woman" only onstage. Without the additional ornaments, the same body is misused, molested, and disrespected. This double vision sheds light on Foucault's idea that bodies are made by regimes of visibility because Komola is trained to be seen but is never allowed to be. Additionally, Butler's ideas help to understand that Komola is not revealing a hidden self. He is manufacturing gender through repetitive acts demanded by tradition and economy. In a scene, Jahir recalls his memories when he was forced to leave his mother and sister to earn money. He did not choose femininity; it was imposed on him by poverty. His androgynous body was exploited for entertainment. Where Woolf imagines androgyny as a creative fusion, Komola reveals what happens when this fusion is externally imposed.

Transnational feminist theorists such as Chandra Talpade Mohanty debate against generalizing gender categories that ignore imposed power dynamics and cultural specificity in *Feminism Without Borders* (2003). Mohanty says that feminist theory must address "the complex, overlapping, and uneven effects of power" rather than assuming a universal female experience (13). She critiques Western theories for universalizing gender oppression while ignoring historical and geopolitical specificity. Her essay *Under Western Eyes* (2003) can be considered a foundational text of postcolonial and transnational feminist theory. According to Mohanty, Western ideologies are generally imposed

on subjects belonging to all non-Western contexts. Western feminist ideologies do not consider the colonial, economic, or migration narratives, or the sufferings of colonized subjects. Mohanty swears that such approaches risk reproducing colonial hierarchies by constructing a monolithic femininity. She interrogates how Western feminist scholarship represents "Third World women" in a homogenizing and essentialist manner. She argues that Western feminism often creates a false image of colonized subjects and portrays them as universally oppressed, ignorant, poor, and tradition-bound. This notion disregards historical, cultural, class, and political specificities. This universalization silences or misrepresents local contexts and resistances.

Like Spivak, Mohanty observes the epistemic violence involved in the essentialist ideologies of subjectivity from a dominant gaze rather than from Western eyes. She emphasizes the need to confirm "the specificities of context and power" while analyzing gendered experience (Mohanty 13). However, Mohanty does not reject Western frameworks. Rather, she urges a transnational perspective based on context-specific analysis. In *Orientalism* (1979), Said also describes how knowledge has reproduced the binary of "civilized vs. uncivilized" in gender discourse. He critiques Western narratives of the East. These critiques stress the need for contextual adaptation rather than rejection. Performative identities challenge patriarchy while remaining entangled in local constraints. Hence, this thesis tries to extend Woolf and Butler beyond

Euro-American contexts, demonstrating that creative fluidity is globally inflected and politically situated.

Thus, Komola's gender fluidity and femininity may be an expression of creative selfhood, but it is not freedom; it is Jahir's strategy for survival in the colonized world addressed by Mohanty. For him, identity is socially forced, and androgyny is commodified as cultural labor. His body becomes an object rather than a subject. He shows that creativity without freedom becomes only exploitation, and performativity without protection becomes tragedy. Transnational criticism helps to understand this situation as a postcolonial dynamic where art becomes survival. That is why Mohanty warns against abstracting gender from material power structures (13). Komola's ultimate fate is marked by punishment and erasure that refuse the liberal celebration of difference. It exposes how fragile non-normative lives often face failure of recognition. This tragedy highlights what Butler calls the "limits of livability" (24). Komola's murder signifies the impossibility of androgynous becoming in a society that desires femininity aesthetically but punishes it socially. The film thus historicizes Woolf's warning about blocked creativity. It argues that performativity without social transformation leads to death. Komola's creativity reveals that gender is constructed, but society's retaliation shows that its revelation threatens moral order.

Another one of Ahmed's film *Noy Number Bipod Shongket* (2007) portrays other ways in which gender can be performative. It shows that Mr. Sobhan's sons-in-law are very timid and shy compared to their wives,

who are strong and opinionated. The husbands remain subordinate to their wives. Ahmed often subverted traditional roles of masculinity and highlighted men who are emotional, philosophical, naive, and flawed. In this film, the main female character, Ranjana, plays an important role in resolving the issues among Mr. Shobhan's family members. She is empowered and takes her decisions very confidently without caring about others' thoughts. At the last scene, she is seen performing as both male and female. She also sings in both masculine and feminine voices in this very performance. It showcases that androgynous performativity is a must in creativity.

While concentrating on films that portray gender performativity as a performance literally, it will be good to turn to the film *Chitrangada: The Crowning Wish* (2012). Directed by Rituparno Ghosh, the film reworks Rabindranath Tagore's dance drama, *Chitrangada*. Tagore took the character Chitrangada from the Mahabharata for his operatic verses and lyrics, and used the story to examine the ideas of gender roles and sexual and romantic desire. Ghosh, in turn, replayed this story in cinematic form to examine desire, sexual attraction, and gender identity. Ghosh openly displayed his own androgynous identity and was himself in the process of gender reassignment surgery when he died. His personal attire, mannerisms, and accessories represented an androgynous and gender fluid perspective. His films often merged autobiography with myth. Hence, his own life is represented through this film. By choosing Chitrangada, a warrior woman raised as a man, Ghosh tried to connect

ancient narrative with modern transgender experience. In this film, he himself plays the protagonist, and the character of a dance choreographer, Rudra, who struggles with his gender identity while undergoing gender reassignment surgery. The film investigates the navigation of gender expression and the impact of such a situation on family and other relationships. Rudra's emotional journey also includes Partho, a percussionist who is a drug addict, with whom Rudra builds a passionate bond.

A particular scene in the film draws our special attention. This is the scene of a rehearsal, as the drama troupe gets ready for its performance. Here, the protagonist is seen directing the dancers, laying special emphasis on the feminine nature of their dance. This serves as the theatrical teaching of gender because it teaches how to 'do' femininity. Rudra corrects the dancers' posture and movements, revealing that gender is a learned act. The choreography embodies Butler's thesis that gender is a set of learned and performed behavior. Then the medical clinic where Rudra goes for his surgery, becomes, in this context, a space where his gender identity seeks authorization and the surgery is what would give his identity coherence. Foucault's ideas as expressed in *The Birth of the Clinic* (1994) helps to understand this authority of medical discourse. It does not offer gender reassignment as pure liberation but opens the door of submission towards another truth. Rudra is never sure that the surgery will bring happiness. The mirror

scene underscores this doubt and the constant questioning whether the self can be rebuilt through medical intervention.

In the scene, Rudra stands before a mirror while trying on women's clothes. His reflection highlights a fluid persona that is neither fully male nor fully female. Thus, the mirror becomes a space of becoming. This scene is not about becoming a woman. It is about the futility of seeking fixed categories. In this sense, *Chitrangada* directly echoes Woolf's idea of psychic androgyny. Rudra fails in his desire to become a woman, of replacing one gender with another; he continues to inhabit a mixed interiority. The mythic frame of this film allows desire to appear as spiritual rather than merely anatomical. The film argues that gender is theatrical, identity is unfinished, and androgyny is spiritual. The 2019 South Indian film *Rudhramadevi* also presents a gender-performative, androgynous story in which an Indian princess disguises herself as a man to save her pupil. Another similar example is the famous Disney film Mulan (1998), where the main character acts as a man to win a war. Both films show that being a fighter and a patriot requires no gender-specific skill.

These filmic examples reveal that creative spaces can resist societal boundaries even when society is opposed to gender nonconformity. These cultural productions paint how gender fluidity and creative performance are deeply shaped by cultural values or hierarchies. They convey ways of self-expression that Western feminist or queer theory alone can never account for. Transnational study ensures

that these contexts are recognized as distinct articulations of fluid identity. Hence, this thesis tries to project that creativity needs fluidity. Every gender should be respected, but if the mind is bound by fixed gender identity, true creativity could never be born. The literary examples mentioned earlier, also portray that intellectual authority demands a fluid perspective. If the writers or directors kept their thoughts limited to their biological gender ideals, then such creative works could never see the light of day.

3.4 [Desire as Disruption and Rationality]

Joyland, written and directed by Saim Sadiq, illustrates transgender identities as living reality, masculinity as fragile, and performance as survival. It presents gender fluidity in contemporary Lahore. Sadiq's personal history matters for the exploration of this film. He grew up in a patriarchal Pakistani household. His films often explore male softness and female frustration. The film centers on Haider, an unemployed, passive husband living in Lahore with his wife Mumtaz. Haider takes a job as a background dancer in a theatre dance troupe and falls in love with the lead performer Biba. Biba's dance is portrayed as gender performativity in the film. Her rehearsals do not mimic biological femininity but stylize it. This suggests that femininity is not just biological; it is produced through repetition. Biba's body enacts Butler's theory of performativity by producing gender through gesture, costume, and choreography. Biba's rehearsal scenes also highlight drag as a

disciplined craft. Her choreography overstresses femininity, aligning with Butler's idea that drag reveals gender's imitativeness.

One scene presents Biba's stage performance where she dances under bright lights, wearing glittering costumes. She becomes powerful and confident in the state. This recalls Woolf's idea that creative minds must resist rigid gender roles. But off stage, because of this very femininity, she is mocked and excluded by all. This contrast portrays gender just as a performative visibility that is accepted only as spectacle but is rejected as life. For instance, the body is visible, but the person is erased. It does not turn Biba into a symbol. It shows her as a woman who wants love, not just recognition. Unlike Komola, Biba performs femininity by choice. While Komola's body is trained into femininity, Biba's body authors femininity. This shift from imposed performance to a chosen act one marks the transition from androgyny to performativity. Unlike Komola, Biba does not die, but loses recognition. Butler's discussion of unlivable lives frames this outcome. Here, visibility produces both agency and danger. Unlike Komola's rural enclosure, *Joyland* unfolds in the urban circle of cinema, theatre, and family spaces where visibility is possible yet dangerous. In the final sequences, when tragedy happens to Biba, the film shows how society can desire transgendered bodies but refuses to protect transgender lives.

On the other hand, Haider is portrayed as a man who is neither dominant nor assertive. Therefore, not only women but also men face difficulties while living in a society filled with superficial expectations.

Men are expected to be physically and emotionally strong. If a man feels emotionally weak, he is humiliated by all. Haider's failure to conform to traditional masculinity marks him as a Woolf's "woman-manly" subject trapped in a Butlerian regulatory order. His gentle masculinity resists traditional male dominance. He cooks, listens, and is a hesitant personality. This makes him not manly in his family's eyes. Haider's gentleness resembles Woolf's belief that masculinity need not be violent. His inner conflict shows a psychological split between social demand and emotional truth. Furthermore, Haider's attraction to Biba destabilizes heterosexual masculinity. Desire here is not corrective but disruptive.

Muñoz's concept of "disidentification" helps to explain this. Haider neither fully embraces nor rejects masculinity; he inhabits a fragile in-betweenness (Muñoz 11). Therefore, desire becomes a mode of critique here. Loving Biba exposes the artificiality of Haidar's family's gender ideology. Butler argues that desire reveals the instability of identity norms (23). Moreover, Haider's household is ruled by a disabled patriarch who demands a male heir. The household showcases masculinity through employment, reproduction, and obedience. It focuses on Foucault's argument that the family is not neutral; it is a technology of normalization. Additionally, *Joyland* contrasts two performances, one, Mumtaz's compulsory role of a housewife and two, Biba's chosen stage femininity. One is constrained normativity, and the other is resistance through artistry. Mumtaz is trapped in reproductive labor, exemplifying Woolf's critique of why women are denied creative autonomy. Biba, by

contrast, produces meaning through her dance performance. This creates a structural opposition. Mumtaz's confinement to domestic labor dramatizes Woolf's critique that women's creativity is strangled by economic dependence. It revisits Woolf's argument that creativity requires material independence. Seen through Woolf, Biba's stage becomes her "room of one's own," a space for personal expression within a patriarchal society. Biba's artistic labor challenges cultural norms, revealing the tensions between expressive freedom and oppressive structures.

Though culturally distant, the film echoes Woolf's argument that creativity demands personal and geographic autonomy that are denied to many gender minorities. Another crucial scene shows Mumtaz removing her makeup after work. Her exhaustion parallels Biba's vulnerability after performance. Both women are trapped in roles. Femininity here becomes a burden rather than an essence. Additionally, the film's later representation of loss and repression echoes Butler's warning that non-normative lives are "undone" by norms (23). Biba's public presence invites danger, and Mumtaz's despair, expose how patriarchy injures women and queer bodies. Sadiq tried to reimagine patriarchal Pakistan through the utopian vision of *Joyland*. The film's title itself represents this perspective. It frames gender fluidity not as utopia but as an ethical demand. Haider's softness and Biba's trans identity are accepted only as deviations.

This analysis of *Joyland* can be read in the light of an earlier film *Paris Is Burning* (1990). Directed by Jennie Livingston, *Paris is Burning* is a documentary film based on *Bodies That Matter*. It focuses on New York's ballroom culture of the 1980s, and how its drag performances are based on issues of race, class, and queerness. This film documents New York City's ballroom scene, especially through Black and Latino LGBTQ+ communities in Harlem. The participants compete in drag balls to perform different categories such as: Voguing, Drag act, Realness, Fashion, and identity fluid performances. These categories showcase class domination and gender ideals. The film also follows several major figures of ballroom culture, including: Pepper LaBeija, Dorian Corey, Angie Xtravaganza, Venus Xtravaganza, and so on. They belong to "Houses," which function as alternative families for LGBTQ+ people who are often rejected by their families. That is why *Paris Is Burning* is widely studied in queer theory, gender studies, and cultural studies.

The film is often analyzed using Butler's concept of gender performativity. In fact, Butler uses it extensively to illustrate her concepts in her book *Bodies That Matter*. The ballroom performances portrayed in the film illustrate Butler's idea that gender is performed through repeated acts. The movie paints Butler's theorization of what society calls natural masculinity or femininity are actually an imitation of norms. The judges' reward of the drag visualizes conformity, proving that gender is scripted. It is useful to turn to the discursive ideas of Foucault at this point, whose treatise on *The History of Sexuality* (1990) shows

how sexuality has been scripted through ideological structures. Thus, we all learn to play our roles within those structures. The ballroom culture can be seen both as a parody and a pastiche of such discourse (to use Jameson's formulation) as they both resist and reproduces the hierarchy based on religious and social ideology. In the film, Venus Xtravaganza describes her dream of becoming a spoiled, rich, white girl. Her words reveal that gender performance intersects with class and race. According to Xtravaganza, to perform femininity is also to perform wealth and whiteness.

Another major moment is Pepper LaBeija's explanation of realness. She says that to win, one must look like a straight businessman, a schoolboy, or a glamorous woman. This highlights that gender and class are judged visually, and identity becomes a costume of aspiration. The film shows that though visibility brings joy, it also exposes bodies to danger, as seen in Venus Xtravaganza's murder. This brings out the brutal reality that performance cannot protect the body from violence. Gender fluidity here becomes joyful but dangerous. In the movie, voguing resembles Woolf's vision of gender as a style rather than destiny. The voguing scenes show how bodies move in exaggerated feminine poses, such as gestures, parodies of fashion models, and celebrities. They expose how natural femininity is nothing but artificial. Livingston's directorial style enables the viewers to observe these ideas in operation. The film appears as a record of how marginalized people create alternative worlds. This tension reflects the film's main theme that

visibility can be empowering but also exploitative. It also shows that gender is a stylized imitation, identity is a communal construction, and performance is resistance.

At this point, the attention must turn back to South Asia, but this time through a literary text. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is a 2017 novel written by Arundhati Roy, which shows that gender identity is a continuous creative negotiation with violence, history, and embodiment. Roy grounds gender fluidity in material marginality through presenting it as a survival strategy. It serves the role of resistance against state oppression. A major portion of the book also resembles the brutal everyday reality of Kashmir. Roy constructs gender fluidity not only as a fixed identity but as a process of becoming through rupture, ambiguity, and imaginative survival through her characters. It explores the social and political turmoil of contemporary Delhi, through lives shaped by love, loss, and resistance. The novel also investigates marginalization, gender identity, nationalism, and ecological decay. The book’s non-linear structure highlights its fragmented society, while its imagery, protests, and rebirth suggest resilience. The narrative starts from the crowded spaces of Old Delhi to the contested war-torn valleys of Kashmir.

The central figures of the novel include Anjum and Tilo. Anjum is a transgender woman or a *hijra* who makes her home in a graveyard. Tilo or Tilottama is an unconventional architect who is linked to Kashmir's resistance and several men, including a Kashmiri freedom fighter named Musa. Her life story intersects with the political violence of Kashmir. The

novel critiques political violence, injustices, and power. It focuses on solidarity, resilience, and families of rejected identities. Anjum's identity destabilizes the epistemological structure of gender. Roy explicitly frames her not as a resolved identity but as a productive ambiguity: "She…augmented by her ambiguity" (126). This ambiguity becomes generative, not pathological. Anjum's augmentation signals that gender fluidity is multiplicity and creative expansion of selfhood. Through this character, Roy suggests that fluid existence exceeds discursive containment. Thus, gender is not merely performed as Butler discusses, but is created in excess of language. This points creative becoming beyond systemic structures.

Anjum was born intersexed, and was first named Aftab. Soon, she leaves her home and name to live in the "Khwabgah," or the House of Dreams. It is not just a refugee camp, but a counter-epistemic site where gender can be rewritten. Anjum's journey from Aftab to Anjum is not only a transition in the linear sense; it is a recomposition of self and a creative re-inscription of embodiment. The community living in Khwabgah exists outside the norms of existence: "This place…is the place of falling people…We aren't even real" (Roy 88). Here, transgender identities escapes rigid classifications. This place becomes a site of fluid, ongoing self-creation. After a traumatic riot, Anjum leaves the community and moves into a graveyard. She creates a guesthouse there, which becomes a sanctuary for the outsiders, and where she wants to adopt a child. Here, gender fluidity becomes a spatial practice.

She creates a network and ultimately produces an alternative social order. The graveyard becomes a metaphor for a new kind of community existing between life and death. This foregrounds the beings who are intentionally excluded from society. Anjum's life in the graveyard is the novel's most radical gesture of creative gendered existence. "She lived in the graveyard like a tree" (Roy 7). The metaphors showcased in this phrase are significant because the tree is a rooted thing, yet it grows. This presents fluidity. Again, the Graveyard is a space between life and death, which mirrors in-betweenness. Anjum's desire to be a mother again complicates normative frameworks: "She…who wanted a baby" (Roy 126). It reveals gender fluidity as emotionally expansive. Additionally, it resists the idea that queer lives should live outside emotional experiences of the heteronormative society.

3.5 [Androgynous Mind and Bodily Performance as Builders of Artistic Self]

An androgynous mind combined with bodily performativity creates creative identities. This exemplifies, *Ar Ekti Premer Golpo: Just Another Love Story* (2010). It is film directed by Kaushik Ganguly, which tells a romantic story between a modern-day filmmaker and his bisexual lover. The film projects the struggles of transgendered identity, mental trauma, rejection from society, queerness, and the challenges faced by marginalized subjects. The title of the film itself is important because it tries to normalize something that is often considered a social taboo. Translating the title inspires one to take a tabooed romantic tale as just

another love story. The film shows Abhiroop Sen as a Delhi-based filmmaker and his cinematographer Basu, as a bisexual. The story shows that both of them went to Kolkata to make a documentary on the life of the legendary Jatra actor Chapal Bhaduri. He was renowned for playing female roles as “Chapal Rani.” He was working at a time when females were not permitted to perform on stage. This aligns with *Ghetuputra Komola*’s situation discussed earlier. Thus, Abhiroop faces much difficulty while working on his project as a transgendered person.

The film connects Abhiroop’s life and the past life of Bhaduri with the same actor. Ghosh’s personal life mirrors that creative minds require androgynous interiority. In the film, Abhiroop plays the role of Bhaduri for the documentary. He changes personalities while getting ready as a female. A scene shows that while Bhaduri is performing as a woman on stage, he is being insulted as a man off the stage at the same time. His stage success as a woman and social rejection as a man showcase that performance can only be admired when the performer is excluded. Butler clarifies this situation as society desires the effect of femininity without accepting the subject who produces it. Foucault’s notion of counter-archives can be applied here.

The film focuses on lives that history often erases. This shows why, even after existing for a long time, non-normative bodies were never glorified. This again reflects a similar paradox seen in *Ghetuputra Komola*, where society wants the performance but rejects its performer. Ganguly often explores outsider identities such as orphans, artists, and

queers, blending realism with nostalgia. In this movie, by paralleling past and present, Ganguly shows that gender nonconformity has always existed but is rarely honored. In the film, the past love story and the present one mirror each other. Woolf's emphasis on memory and time helps explain how queer identity is built through remembrance, not just the body.

The film projects two love stories. The real one shows real-life Abhiroop's passionate relationship with Basu, who is married to Rani. On the other hand, the documented romance portrays Bhaduri's relationship with Kumar, who is married to Gopa. Lastly, Abhiroop builds an attachment with Uday and Bhaduri to Tushar. Interestingly, the real-life characters' story forecasts in the documentary because the roles connect with each characters' personal life. The film suggests that love is not gendered, performance can produce identity, androgyny is needed for creativity, and history often excludes the marginal. Thus, these filmic examples of creativity reframe androgyny as a political becoming and update Woolf's creative freedom through Butler's performative critique. They stage gender as a performance and prove that creativity exposes gender as constructed. That is why gender fluidity is creatively necessary. The films also show what happens when these forces collide in postcolonial South Asia. They move the argument from what gender is to what gender does. They show that to live outside gender norms is not easy; it is a daily performance of courage.

They project gender is not discovered; it is produced and also show why there is very limited work in these fields. They reveal that gender variance is not outside power; it is formed within the narrative of power, where performance becomes a way to survive disciplinary structures. But they also highlight that these very structures could never be fully escaped from. Tragedy lies in the fact that the same performances that create recognition also expose bodies to danger when repetition exceeds the social norm. These films do not merely represent transgender or queer lives; they expose the mechanics by which gender can be produced. They show that this production is regulated by family, economy, experiences, and spectacle. They restore the psychology of subjects who are reduced to expectations. These films move from the body as costume, to the body as stage, to the body as contested home, to the body as a mythic becoming, and finally to the body as historical memory. These triangulated frameworks make it possible to understand that the films are not isolated cultural texts but as efforts to reform philosophical narratives about how humans become intelligible to one another through gender.

Moving from filmic creative representations of fluidity, to a discussion of creative writings of South Asia that celebrate and represent trans or queer experiences, the graphic novel *Apsara Engine* comes to mind. It is written by writer and visual artist Bishakh Som and was collectively published in 2020. This illustrative book presents eight short stories that blend fiction, queer identity, and South Asian creative

aesthetics. It explores the intersections of gender, architecture, and utopian futures. The stories explore alternative realities, dreamscapes, and cityscapes inhabited by queer and gender-nonconforming characters. Som radicalizes gender through imaginative futures and aesthetic experimentation. His storytelling merges realism with mythic, speculative imagery that crafts environments where identity and architecture collectively become fluid. Som used visual motifs drawn from South Asian art and modernist design to construct his work. His story functions as both a narrative and a visual experiment, where design mirrors emotional landscapes.

Som explicitly collapses the distinction between reality and possibility. This serves as a major theoretical shift by projecting that gender is not discovered, but is imagined into existence. Thus, this book presents gender fluidity as creative authorship of the self. It shows that, just as gender is unstable, narrative is also non-linear, porous, and mutable, forming a fluid genre. The text performs fluidity through fragmented stories, shifting timelines, and hybrid genres. Here, gender fluidity is speculative and future-oriented, created through art, mapping, and imagination. Through this work, Som emphasizes that queer lives require new forms of representation. Becoming here is not optional; it is politically necessary and creatively constructed. The title itself connects Apsara and Engine. Apsara stands for mythic feminine fluidity, and Engine refers to movement and production. Thus, gender becomes

mythic, technological, and evolving simultaneously that is embedded in a utopian practice of self-making narrative form.

For instance, one of the powerful creative gestures appears in “Swandive,” a short story of *Apsara Engine*, where trans characters map a new world. It portrays two gender nonconforming Bengali Americans at an academic conference. One nonbinary and another a transgender person, studying postcolonial cartography. Their connection deepens as they map a “glorious urban trans future” using their own blood (Som 130). The narrative thus explores the potential to imagine an alternative future, presenting a shared desire for a different world. The creation of this new world in “literal blood” is a metaphor for building a kinship through self-definition rather than inheritance. It challenges dominant narratives by portraying queer and postcolonial desire as a powerful source of world-building.

This new city includes spaces for trans lives that transforms it into a queer world. This aesthetic and political move unpacks how creative gestures function within trans narrative practice. The creative gesture here operates on both the formal and thematic levels. *Swandive* explores trans identity, memory, migration, and self-making through a visual narrative. It does not simply depict trans characters as subjects within an already-given social reality; instead, it that the characters actively can reconfigure the coordinates of reality itself. This aesthetic instability mirrors what Butler would call the non-essential, constructed nature of gender. Som goes further by visualizing this instability rather than just

theorizing it. The act of drawing in the book itself becomes a mode of world-making. The characters of this book do not seek validation within normative structures. Instead, they imagine and inhabit alternative modes of kinship, embodiment, and belonging. Their identities are not framed as deviations from a norm but as generative forces that produce new social landscapes. The characters become the creators of possibility by sketching worlds where identities are not constrained by inherited categories. Rather, they are open, relational, and continually becoming. Som ultimately constructs a fragmented, fluid narrative where past and present, dream, reality, and multiple versions of the self overlaps.

The narrative moves through memory, fantasy, and lived experience without boundaries, reflecting the instability and multiplicity of identity. Its artwork shifts from style and tone, often dissolving fixed bodily forms. Its visual fluidity mirrors the concept of gender as something in process rather than fixed. Rather than portraying trans identity as marginal, the text presents it as a creative force that reimagines spaces and belonging. The protagonist’s movement between cultures complicates identity further. This links gender fluidity with the themes of diaspora and displacement in postcolonial and transnational experience. Hence, Som’s stories are not only about being trans. They are about how trans experience can reshape narrative, perception, and reality. This makes it a key work in contemporary queer and trans visual literature. Hence, the text demonstrates that gender fluidity in South

Asian literature is not merely identity politics but a form of creative becoming. One that reconfigures space, narrative, and embodiment.

Chapter 4

[Conclusion]

The ambition of this thesis was to find the theoretical gap between gender fluidity and creativity. Hence, the study tried to examine that gender fluidity is not merely a thematic concern, but a creative, aesthetic, and political practice that reshapes the understanding of identity and artistic expression. This thesis examined how gender, identity, and creativity intersect not as fixed categories but as fluid, evolving processes. Through Woolf's concept of androgyny and Butler's theory of gender performativity, this study has shown that identity is neither fixed nor naturally determined; rather, it is continuously produced through repetition, negotiation, resistance, and creative self-fashioning. At its core, this research has argued that these discussions are not separate intellectual gestures. They are deeply interconnected frameworks that reveal identity as an ongoing act of becoming.

When read together, their ideas move beyond theory and begin to show how individuals negotiate their identities daily through thought, expression, performance, and resistance. Woolf's modernist aesthetics and Butler's poststructuralist philosophy together reveal that creativity becomes most powerful when gendered boundaries are questioned, disrupted, and reimagined. By extending their conversations into South Asian cinema and cultural texts, the study demonstrates that creativity does not merely reflect identity; it actively reshapes, and liberates it. This

study suggests that, creativity should no longer be treated as an abstract aesthetic ideal or a privileged intellectual pursuit; it should be considered a survival strategy, a language of self-articulation, and at times, an act of defiance.

Behind every act of creative expression lies a negotiation with society, a quiet insistence on existing otherwise. The discussion further demonstrates that fluid identity operates differently across cultural and historical contexts, particularly within patriarchal and postcolonial societies. Works such as *Ghetuputra Komola* and *Joyland* show how bodies, performances, and desires challenge dominant structures of heteronormativity, social regulation, and gendered power. At the same time, these works reveal the painful contradiction that gender fluidity may be admired aesthetically while being punished socially. Importantly, even within these constraints, creative acts, whether through literature, performance, or cinema, continue to carve out spaces of possibility.

They allow individuals to imagine themselves beyond what is prescribed. Therefore, this thesis concludes that creative fluidness is essential to understanding identity as a process of becoming. Art, literature, and performance do not simply represent gender; they actively reshape it, opening transformative possibilities for subjectivity, resistance, and aesthetic freedom. Ultimately, this thesis suggests that to understand creativity is to understand the human desire for transformation. The urge to write, perform, imagine, or create is inseparable from the urge to become something more, or simply oneself

in a world that often resists such becoming. Thus, this study gestures toward a broader ethical understanding that identities become most alive when they are allowed to remain open, unfinished, and free to evolve.

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